DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BUSINESS PLAN 2008–2009

Table of Contents

1. Message from Minister and Deputy Minister 1

2. Mission 2

3. Link to the New Nova Scotia 2

4. Planning Context 4
   - The Planning Environment 4
   - Department Structure 8

5. Goals of the Department 10

6. Core Business Areas and Functions 10
   - Primary–12 Education 10
   - Higher Education 12
   - Corporate Policy 12
   - Corporate Services 14

7. Priorities and Performance Measures for 2008–09 15
   - Goal 1 15
   - Goal 2 19
   - Goal 3 24
   - Goal 4 27
   - Goal 5 28
   - Goal 6 32
   - Goal 7 33

8. Human Resources Strategy 37

9. Budgeting Context 38

1. Message from the Minister and Deputy Minister

In keeping with the province's commitment to be more accountable to the public for its actions, all departments and agencies are required to prepare annual business plans describing their priorities for the next fiscal year. The Department of Education is proud to present its business plan for 2008–09.

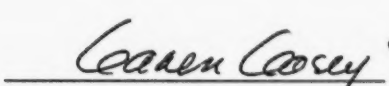
This year the Department of Education underwent significant change with the creation of the new Department of Labour and Workforce Development. The Skills and Learning core business area has moved into this new department.

In May 2005, Nova Scotia introduced a new plan for P-12 education, *Learning for Life II: Brighter Futures Together*, developed in collaboration with hundreds of education partners. In 2008–09, the department will continue to implement the initiatives included in the four-year plan to help students in primary to grade 12 succeed in school. The Premier's Forum on Student Achievement, held in November 2007, brought together partners from across the education system to discuss key issues facing the Nova Scotia public education system. Feedback from our partners at that event will contribute to work in 2008–09 to begin development of the next phase of the strategic plan for public education, Learning for Life III.

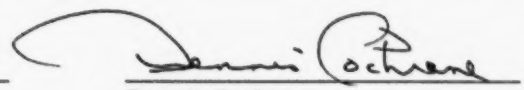
Many of the key issues facing Nova Scotia today require a collaborative effort between partners in order to effect change. The Department of Education is working with its partners to address some of these very important issues, including implementation of the Child and Youth Strategy, the Health Promoting Schools initiative, and Active Kids, Healthy Kids.

The province's post-secondary education sector includes the province's universities, the Nova Scotia Community College, and private career colleges. The department will continue to work with its partners to ensure that Nova Scotia post-secondary students have access to an equitable and high quality education. This will include implementing Government's commitment to make university tuition more affordable; responding to the recommendations arising from the review of teacher education; building federal support for an infrastructure renewal program for the public post-secondary education system; introducing a direct-lend model for student loans; and supporting the Nova Scotia Community College Growth Strategy. The department is also responsible for the Nova Scotia public library system, and in 2008–09, the department will develop a memorandum of understanding, which will provide for multi-year operating funding for public libraries.

Working with our educational partners, students and parents, we will move forward with these initiatives in order to build a high quality education system, a strong workforce, and a bright future for all Nova Scotians.



Honourable Karen Casey
Minister of Education



Dennis Cochrane
Deputy Minister

2. Mission

The department's goals, guiding principles and strategies help to develop an environment where education and training are valued, achievement is celebrated, and learners are provided with opportunities and tools for rewarding and successful learning experiences.

Our mission is...
to provide excellence in education and training for personal fulfilment and for a productive, prosperous society.

Belief statements that underpin this mission statement reflect the department's commitment to access to lifelong learning opportunities, full participation at all levels of the education and training system for all Nova Scotians, and accountability of all partners.

3. Link to the New Nova Scotia

The Department of Education's strategic goals and priorities are aligned with, and supportive of, Government's corporate direction as set out in the New Nova Scotia, within the context of fiscal sustainability and a balanced budget.

Creating winning conditions and seizing new economic opportunities means that Nova Scotians are well equipped to contribute to and avail themselves of the economic opportunities of tomorrow. This requires a well-educated population able to take on the challenges of tomorrow. The initiatives undertaken by the Department of Education contribute to both individual well-being as well as supporting ***healthy families and communities***.

The Department of Education strategic goals contribute primarily to Creating Winning Conditions and supporting Healthy Families and Communities. The department's priorities were developed by considering the degree to which they support these Government priorities. The linkages between the strategic goals and individual corporate priorities are noted in the table below. Detail on the priorities for 2008–09 under each strategic goal can be found in Section 7.

Link between Department of Education Goals and the New Nova Scotia

Strategic Goal	New Nova Scotia Corporate Priorities
Improve conditions for learning in the public education system	• Healthy, Active Nova Scotians • Globally Competitive Workforce
Strengthen educational programming and services in priority areas	
Enable the provision of relevant and high quality post-secondary education and training	• Globally Competitive Workforce
Promote healthy, active learning communities and families	• Vibrant Communities
Foster access, equity and diversity through and within education and training	• Accessible Services • Vibrant Communities • Globally Competitive Workforce
Develop a skilled and adaptable workforce	• Globally Competitive Workforce
Strengthen accountability in the areas of governance, resource investment and utilization, and reporting of results	• Creating Winning Conditions

There are two frameworks which guide Government's corporate path: *Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity* and *Social Prosperity –Weaving the Threads: A Lasting Social Fabric.* The Framework for Social Prosperity ensures that social and economic prosperity move forward together to support social prosperity now and in the future.

Many of the Department of Education's priorities for 2008–09 are aligned with the Framework for Social Prosperity, and support the concept of social sustainability, one of the key concepts which underpins the Framework. Sustainability education is a focus of the department, and curriculum focused on this issue permeates the public school program. Some of the Department of Education initiatives which support *Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity*, such as the Skills Nova Scotia Framework, have moved to the new Department of Labour and Workforce Development in 2008–09.

4. Planning Context

A) The Planning Environment

In the Speech from the Throne, Government identified five immediate priorities which flow from the two corporate frameworks. The Department of Education initiatives outlined in the 2008–09 business plan contribute to Educating to Compete, one of the five government priorities.

In Educating to Compete, Government identified areas of focus to raise the bar for childrens' education within an inclusive education system and committed to working towards making post secondary education in Nova Scotia more affordable. These items are included in the department priorities for 2008–09. Please see Section 7 for more detail.

As needs change, the department must have a strong capacity to address current and emerging needs. Within this context, a number of key strategic issues and key challenges are identified.

Key Strategic Issues

Healthy, Active Learners	To achieve good health, a focus on active, healthy living must be integrated into all aspects of our life, from home to school to work. Schools play an important role in promoting healthy living, which includes provision of nutritious food and beverage choices in the school, promotion of physical activity, and leadership on healthy living practices that support students to become better, more engaged learners at school and healthier Nova Scotians for life. Given the increasing health concerns in our youth population, the role of schools in promoting healthy living is of increasing importance.
Inter-Sectoral Issues	Many issues that face the education system cannot be addressed by one department alone. It has become clear that to achieve our goals, collaborative work among departments is essential. This need is reflected in the development of the new Social Prosperity Framework, which provides a path to ensure the province's strategies, policies, and programs work together to advance the future vision for Nova Scotia. Many of the current projects being undertaken by the department are collaborative efforts with other departments, including the Strategy for Children and Youth, Health Promoting Schools, and Active Kids, Healthy Kids.

Skilled and Knowledgeable Workforce

Over the next decade, declining population growth, an aging population, changing technology, and rising education and skill requirements will require new partnerships and creative approaches to knowledge and skill development. The changing nature of work, society, the economy, and technology require that learning institutions provide options and opportunities that will allow students to reach their potential by acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed in today's world.

Accountability

The department will continue to strengthen accountability at all levels of the education system. A key element of accountability is to ensure that standards of quality are established, measured, and reported upon. These standards enable the system to measure its achievements and determine where improvements are required. It is important to monitor the performance of students and schools and the role of teachers in the teaching process and report the results to stakeholders, including parents.

Over the last two years, the department has undertaken several major reviews with a view to ensuring that programs and services meet the needs of Nova Scotians. These reviews undertaken include the school review process, services for students with special needs, Mi'kmaq services, student walking distances, and a review of teacher education. The recommendations arising from these reviews inform Government in developing more effective programming and service delivery.

Supports for teachers and principals

Research shows that differences in teacher quality are the main determinant of differences in student learning. We must support our teachers and principals in achieving excellence in instruction and leadership. The department recognizes this as an ongoing strategic issue, and works with school boards to identify supports and strategies to ensure that teachers and principals have the necessary supports for professional growth and development.

Communication with Partners

Nova Scotia's public education system represents a complex, multi-stakeholder communications environment. The department of education, school boards, principals, teachers, school advisory councils, parents and others must work together in a changing variety of configurations in the best interests of students. This requires a communications system that is targeted, flexible and inclusive.

Key Challenges

Demographic Shift

The education system continues to face considerable demographic pressures, particularly in rural communities and small schools, that will require an integrated approach to policy development and planning. The current funding allocation model among school boards uses enrolment as one of several determinants. Declining enrolment creates challenges in teaching, particularly in later grades with regard to the range of courses that can be offered and the acquisition of teachers for specialized courses. As teachers retire, a shortage of teachers in some subjects is predicted. Declining populations in rural areas of Nova Scotia also present challenges to rural public library systems in terms of service delivery and funding. Declining enrolments will also create capacity challenges for the university system. Finally, as professors age and retire, faculty recruitment and retention will be a very significant issue facing our post-secondary education system.

Aging Infrastructure

Another ongoing challenge for the education system is the maintenance and building of public education facilities at all levels. Facilities require continuous maintenance because of aging, changes to building codes, and requirements for new technology. This challenge is also faced by the province's public library systems as well as higher education institutions, particularly universities with their need to replace aging facilities. In 2006, the Association of Atlantic Universities estimated the cost of deferred maintenance among Nova Scotia universities and at the NSCC to be $508.5 million.

Key Partnerships for Inter-Governmental Initiatives

Strategy for Children and Youth: Our Kids Are Worth It	Government has stated its commitment to building a better Nova Scotia for individuals, families and communities, with a particular focus on children and youth. The Departments of Community Services, Health, Education, Health Promotion and Protection, and Justice are working together to improve services for children and youth through the development of a comprehensive child and youth strategy which focuses on early intervention, support for families and youth at risk. Specifically, these departments have committed to partnering and coordinating responsibilities for children and youth. This strategy is part of the provinces's new social prosperity framework, *Weaving the Threads: A Lasting Social Fabric*, based on the principles of collaboration, co-ordination, and shared responsibility.
Nova Scotia Drug Strategy	Government has committed to developing a Nova Scotia Drug Strategy that will focus on four key elements: prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and enforcement, thereby providing a balanced approach to the issue. The Department of Education works with the Department of Health Promotion and Protection and other partners to support school boards and schools in addressing prevention and early intervention.
Copyright	Through a leadership role in the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) Copyright Consortium, the Department of Education participates in efforts to encourage the federal government to ensure that amendments to copyright legislation address the needs of students and teachers to access publicly available digital material on the internet for use in the classroom.
Regional and Pan-Canadian Partnerships	Through the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET) and CMEC, Nova Scotia participates in regional and national initiatives to share resources related to education and training.

B) Department Structure

This year the Department of Education underwent significant structural change with the creation of the new Department of Labour and Workforce Development. The Skills and Learning core business area has moved into this new department.

The Department of Education mandate spans the education system from school entry through to all post-secondary destinations. These destinations include community college, private career college, university, and other venues supporting human development. Other responsibilities include public libraries. The Department of Education is structured into operational units which are described briefly as follows.

Public Schools Branch
This branch comprises African Canadian Services, Education Quality Services, English Program Services, Evaluation Services, French Second Language Program Services, Learning Resources and Technology Services, Mi'kmaq Services, Regional Education Services, School Board Labour Relations, Student Services, and Teacher Certification. It is responsible for all educational programs for the English language public school system. In close collaboration with the Acadian and French Language Services branch, it is responsible for services provided to the public school system in assessment and evaluation, educational technology, and school board liaison.

Acadian and French Language Services Branch
The Acadian and French Language Services Branch monitors and approves curriculum development for French first language education, co-ordinates activities related to federal–provincial funding agreements for French first and second language education, and co-ordinates and manages implementation of national official languages programs for Nova Scotia. This branch is responsible for liaison with all community and representative groups as they relate to French first language education and for the coordination of all French language services as they relate to the *French Language Services Act/Loi sur les services en français* and its regulations, including implementing priorities identified in the departmental French Language Services Plan.

Higher Education Branch
This branch comprises Universities and the Nova Scotia Community College, Student Financial Assistance, Private Career Colleges, Post-Secondary Disability Services, and the Provincial Library. This branch promotes equitable and affordable access to quality higher education and knowledge for Nova Scotians in partnership with post-secondary institutions and public libraries.

Corporate Policy Branch
This branch comprises Policy and Planning and Information Management. It is responsible for providing advice and support in policy, planning, legislation, research, coordination, and information and publishing services to all areas of the department. Corporate Policy also coordinates departmental accountability processes including the departmental business plan and support to school board planning processes. This branch also includes the following responsibilities: the departmental library, records management, co-ordination of appointments to agencies, boards and commissions, and administration and advice on the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.*

Corporate Services Branch
This branch comprises Financial Management, Education Funding and Accountability, Facilities Management, Information Technology Services, and Statistics and Data Management. It is responsible for the delivery of business and support services to the Department of Education, including the provision of facilities planning and capital projects, financial management and comptrollership responsibilities, information technology, the province-wide delivery of data communications, the management of educational related data and statistics, and for providing selected services to school boards including a common wide area network and co-ordination of pupil transportation with boards.

Human Resources
This Corporate Service Unit provides human resource management services to the department, with specific attention in a given year to the priorities as defined through the multi-year Human Resources Strategy and the Corporate Human Resources Plan. Further detail on the department's Human Resources Strategy can be found in Section 8.

Communications
Communications provides communications support for government and Department of Education programs, policies, and initiatives. This includes communications planning, issues management, media relations, special events, stakeholder communications, and promotion/marketing.

5. Goals of the Department

Government has identified education as one of five immediate priorities which flow from the two corporate frameworks, *Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity*, and the *Social Prosperity Framework*. The two frameworks guide Government's corporate direction, and priorities within the context of fiscal sustainability and a balanced budget.

The Department of Education's goals for 2008–09 are focused on fulfilling Government's corporate directions and are as follows:

- improve conditions for learning in the public education system
- strengthen educational programming and services in priority areas
- enable the provision of relevant and high quality post-secondary education and training
- promote healthy, active learning communities and families
- foster access, equity and diversity through and within education and training
- develop a skilled and adaptable workforce
- strengthen accountability in the areas of governance, resource investment and utilization, and reporting of results

6. Core Business Areas and Functions

The mandate of the Department of Education spans the public school system, the community college, universities, private career colleges, post-secondary disability services, student assistance, public libraries, and other programs and services to support lifelong learning. The core business areas of the department closely mirror the department's operational organization. The core business areas are primary–12 education, higher education, corporate policy, and corporate services. The related core business functions are identified for each of these areas below.

1. Primary–12 Education

The functions under this core business area involve activities relating to primary-12 education for English first language, French first language, and French second language students. This core business area involves coordinating the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of programs, courses, services, and related policies and resources for the public school system.

These functions include provincial, national, and international assessments of student achievement; special education; comprehensive guidance and counseling; multi-cultural education; support services for the educational achievement of Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotians; the evaluation and provision of print and technological learning resources; professional development for administrators and teachers; school accreditation; correspondence studies; provision of labour relations support to school boards and the provision of advice to school boards in educational and operational matters.

The functions of primary–12 Education are as follows:

- advise Minister on all matters relating to primary–12 education
- identify priorities, co-ordinate the development, and evaluate the implementation of public school programs, policies, educational services, and related priorities
- provide direction and advice to school boards on all matters pertaining to public education
- co-ordinate the development and implementation of educational programming and services to support African Nova Scotian students, Mi'kmaq students, and students enrolled in French and English second language programs
- co-ordinate the development and implementation of programming and services for students with special needs and other student support services
- evaluate resources to be included in *Authorized Learning Resources* and provide technology services to support the curriculum
- provide online education services to increase accessibility to curriculum
- co-ordinate the provincial school accreditation program and the school improvement planning process
- co-ordinate provincial, national, and international assessments and publish an annual *Minister's Report to Parents* on the results
- plan and conduct in-service teacher education and summer institutes, and assist school boards in developing and providing professional development programs
- negotiate and administer federal assistance programs provided under Official Languages in Education Program for French first and second language programs
- in collaboration with the Council of Ministers of Education Canada and the Department of Canadian Heritage, coordinate and administer the minority and second language programs which include four bursary and two language monitor programs
- provide labour relations and legal advisory and representational services to school boards
- provide consultative and advisory and liaison services between school boards and the Department of Education, as well as other education partners such as universities, colleges, other departments and agencies, professional associations and organizations.
- Provide teacher certification and classification functions, and recognize and maintain teacher service records

2. Higher Education

The Higher Education core business area contributes to lifelong learning by providing funding, services and support to post-secondary institutions and public libraries to maintain access to high quality post-secondary education and information. Further, this core business area supports the provision of the necessary, highly qualified personnel to meet labour market demand and the need for a knowledgeable, engaged citizenry.

The functions of Higher Education are as follows:

- advise the Minister on all matters relating to universities and the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) and post-secondary education issues on a provincial, regional and national level
- provide funding and support to universities and the NSCC
- responsible for public libraries
- coordinate federal–provincial and interprovincial negotiations related to post-secondary education, such as student loan policy
- advise the Minister on matters relating to training at private career colleges and develop related policy
- assist adult Nova Scotians with disabilities to obtain access to and to succeed in post-secondary training
- assist the post-secondary education institutions to meet the needs of the labour market
- administer the Canada and Nova Scotia Student Assistance programs, including management and stewardship of the Nova Scotia student loan portfolio
- co-ordinate public library services and promote library cooperation at national, regional, and provincial levels

3. Corporate Policy

The Corporate Policy core business area provides advice and support in policy, planning, legislation, research, coordination, strategic consultations, and information services to all areas of the department. This core business area is focused on ensuring that the department has clear, achievable and appropriate policies in place, decisions are based on high quality research and consultation undertaken to address current and emerging issues, the business planning and budgeting processes are integrated, and the accountability requirements of the department are met.

The functions of Corporate Policy are as follows:

- establish the department's policy and planning agenda and co-ordinate the development, communication, and evaluation of policy for all departmental jurisdictions
- lead strategic and business planning for the department, enhance the integration of planning and budgeting processes, and provide guidance and support to school boards in the development of their business plans
- support a strategic focus on corporate departmental issues and co-ordinate the legislative agenda and related processes
- initiate and co-ordinate policy proposals, departmental positions, Cabinet submissions, and briefing material to support the Deputy Minister, Minister, and Premier
- design and lead large inter-stakeholder meetings to consult on strategic issues and foster linkages with key partners, such as annual *Principals-in-Focus* meetings for public school principals at elementary, junior-high and senior-high levels
- ensure the department meets its accountability requirements through publication of an annual Accountability Report
- undertake focused research to address current and emerging issues, and co-ordinate surveys, evaluations and studies
- co-ordinate interprovincial and intergovernmental relations in matters relating to the responsibilities of the department
- administer the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* for the department and advise on issues related to access to information and privacy
- manage departmental information resources and library services, and develop, implement, and maintain the department's records management system
- provide an electronic and print publishing service
- co-ordinate the appointments process for agencies, boards, and commissions under the department's mandate

4. Corporate Services

The Corporate Services core business area involves the provision of a range of services to the department, school boards, the Nova Scotia Community College, universities, public libraries, and other related organizations to assist the department in meeting its mandate. These services are in the key areas of financial management and control, facilities and transportation, information technology, statistics and data management, and the distribution of learning resources and related products. The Information Technology Services component of the Branch is a corporate services unit which also serves other departments.

The functions of Corporate Services are as follows:

- administer provincial grants to school boards, colleges, universities, community learning organizations, and public libraries
- provide comptrollership functions for the department including financial reporting, budget management, internal control, and administration
- undertake grant-recipient audits, facilities planning, and equipment acquisition
- establish accountability and financial guidelines for school boards and monitor school board financial performance
- manage the Province's school capital program, including the construction of new schools, major alterations and additions to existing schools, the leased school program, and the school indoor air quality program
- monitor school board student transportation systems
- develop and maintain a comprehensive management information system and statistical service relating to public education matters
- co-ordinate and support the use of information technology and provide related consultative and advisory services throughout the education and training system
- provide co-ordinated wide area network (EDnet) communications and services to schools, school boards, the Nova Scotia Community College, Université Sainte-Anne, and libraries for administrative systems, online learning and access to the Internet by students, teachers and the public
- operate the school book bureau

7. Priorities and Performance Measures for 2008-09

Priorities have been grouped under the appropriate strategic goal. This provides a clear linkage between the department's strategic planning and the corresponding priority areas in which work for the 2008–09 year will be focused. Unless otherwise specified, the following P-12 priorities apply to both English as a first language and French as a first language.

Goal 1: Improve conditions for learning in the public education system

Increase the number of schools participating in the School Accreditation Program
2008–09 will be the fourth year of the province-wide implementation of the School Accreditation Program which engages schools in an extensive review of their student achievement and school performance. Accredited schools demonstrate that they have met their goals for student achievement and school performance. To date, eleven schools have been accredited, and it is expected that 17 schools will be accredited by Fall 2008. Additional schools will begin the program in 2008–09.

Support Professional Learning
The department will work with key partners to respond to the recommendations of the Education Professional Development Committee, and will develop a comprehensive plan to support the implementation of collaborative professional learning communities at the school level, within the context of the school accreditation process. The lessons learned from the ongoing work with the first cohort schools and school networks will support this planning process. The focus will be on teacher collaboration and shared learning, instructional leadership skill development, and providing the supporting resources to increase student achievement.

Support Evidence-Based Decision Making
Schools are using more school and student data from assessments and other sources to support accreditation and professional learning. Principals and teachers have clearly stated they need to better understand data collection, data analysis, and ways to use data effectively to help students to improve. The department will provide more resources to support school boards in their efforts in data collection and analysis at the school level.

Implement the Strategy for Children and Youth: Our Kids Are Worth It
The departments of Community Services, Health, Education, Health Promotion and Protection, and Justice are working together to improve services for children and youth through the development of a comprehensive child and youth strategy which focuses on early intervention, support for families and youth at risk.

As part of implementing the Strategy, in 2008-09 the Department of Education will:

- Lead the Schools Plus pilot project, beginning with five sites. This initiative will focus on building a comprehensive and collaborative interagency approach to meeting the needs of children and youth at risk in the public school system. In each Schools Plus pilot, a team of professionals will focus on pathways and access to faster and more comprehensive services for at-risk children and youth. Family members and community agencies will also be involved. The referral to a wide range of specialist support services could include speech language pathology, child and adolescent mental health services, family support services, child care, and intensive behaviour support and sexual health services.

- Implement the Early Development Instrument (EDI). The EDI is a population health survey that measures early development in physical health, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication skills/general knowledge, for populations of young children.

Extend the Class Size Initiative to Grade 4
The department will extend the class size initiative to cap grade 4 at 28 students. It is anticipated that class size reduction will continue up to and including grade 6.

Undertake a High School Follow Up Survey
The department will conduct a follow-up survey of 2006 Nova Scotia high school graduates to improve its understanding of the high school system's ability to prepare graduates for life after high school, assess the skills acquired in high school, and track the activities of high school students after graduation. This survey will draw from the results of the 2006 High School Graduate Intentions Survey. The 2008 follow-up survey continues to build the department's understanding and knowledge about the activities of Nova Scotia high school graduates.

Increase Alignment Between Teacher Educational Background and Subjects Taught
Research shows that differences in teacher quality are the main determinant of differences in student learning, and the presence of deep content knowledge is a critical factor in delivering quality instruction. Further to an analysis undertaken in 2007-08 examining the extent to which public school courses are taught by teachers with related undergraduate education, in 2008-09 the department will work with school boards and the NSTU to develop strategies to increase the alignment between teacher post-secondary educational background and teaching assignment.

Undertake Research on the Substitute Teacher Labour Market
An analysis of teacher supply and demand projections, undertaken in 2007, identified several areas of concern with respect to the availability of and school boards' ability to recruit qualified substitute teachers. In response to these concerns, and the need for more information on these issues, the department will undertake additional research on the Nova Scotia substitute teacher labour market in 2008-09. This will include a survey of newly certified teachers and a survey of substitute teachers in Nova Scotia to provide important information about circumstances regarding teacher employment in Nova Scotia and substitute teachers' educational backgrounds, intentions and aspirations.

Continue School Capital Construction Program
The department will continue implementation of the Province's School Capital Construction Program, maintaining and refurbishing the province's public schools. In 2008-09 it is anticipated that four new schools will finish construction, and that seven school additions and alterations projects will be completed.

Goal 1 Performance Measures
Outcome: Schools identify areas needing improvement and develop a plan

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target	Strategies
Number of schools involved in School Improvement Planning/Accreditation	49 (2005-06)	115 (2006-07) 210 (2007-08)	All 434 Schools (2009-10)	Workshops and support materials (e.g. handbooks) for all schools involved Teams of 3-4 educators work with schools for 3 days in the spring
Number of schools receiving accreditation	11 (2007-08)	Not yet available	115 (2010-11)	Provide implementation grants to schools. Accountability checks with schools at the end of the process

Outcome: Safe and Healthy Learning Environment

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2009-10)	Comments
Number of schools that have received professional development on the Positive and Effective Behavior Supports Strategy.	100 (2005-06)	300 (2006-07) 434 (2007-08)	All 434 schools	The department achieved the target for this measure in 2007-08. As such the measure will be discontinued in subsequent business plans.

Outcome: Class sizes are reduced

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2010-11)	Strategies
Number of grade levels for which class size is capped at 25	Primary (2003-04)	p-1 (2004-05) p-2 (2005-06) p-3 (2006-07) p-4 (2008-09)[1]	P- 6	Over time, expand the Class Size Initiative up to and including grade 6.

Outcome: Students have access to computers at school

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2010-11)	Strategies
Percent of Grade 10-12 classrooms with three or more current computers.	31.8% (2005-06)	43.1% (2006-07)	65%	Information Economy Initiative extension program funds software, professional development and technological support in schools. Technology recycling program provides 4000 computers each year to public schools.

[1]In 2008-09, class sizes will be capped at 28.

Outcome: Better Educated Nova Scotians

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2008-09)	Strategies
High School Graduation Rate	84.3% (2004-05)	85.0% (2005-06) 84.8% (2006-07)	Increase over baseline	Implement strategies targeted towards youth at risk of leaving school early

Goal 2: Strengthen educational programming and services in priority areas

Respond to recommendations from Minister's review of services for students with special needs
In 2007, through a public consultation process, an external Review Panel examined special education programming and services to determine if they are achieving their desired results. In 2008-09, the department will implement a number of initiatives in response to the recommendations of the Review Panel. These include development of a provincial learning disabilities strategy; a review of the Tuition Support Program; extension of provincial assessments to private schools that offer the provincial program of studies; a review and update to the Teacher Assistant Guidelines; and development of teacher resources on programming related to life skills for students with special needs.

Increase Training Available for French Immersion Resource Teachers
A new university degree program in resource teaching for students in French Immersion has been developed by the Department of Education and St. Francis Xavier University. The 12-course, 28-month program reflects best current practices in the fields of French second language, differentiation and special education and will be offered through a combination of on-site and on-line course delivery. There are 18 participants selected for the first cohort which began in February 2008.

Provide Supports for Teachers of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder
The department will continue to provide support to school boards for professional development and resources for teachers to develop and consolidate skills in teaching students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Pilot demonstration sites have been implemented in each school board and on-site coaching will be provided in five school boards. Pivotal Response Training will be presented to selected teachers. The Assessment of Basic Language Learning Skills training will continue with the third day of training offered to 40 teachers from across Nova Scotia.

Public School Programming for the Early Years
The department will complete the pre-primary program pilot which was offered in the 2007–08 school year in 19 sites for 280 students across the province. As part of the Schools Plus project, the department will work with boards and other partners, including not-for-profit and for-profit providers, to explore options for delivery of early learning programs in public schools.

Effective for the 2008–09 school year, the age of admission to public schools will change to five years on or before December 31 of the school year. The department will support grade primary teachers and students through the provision of *Primary Program: A Teaching Resource*, professional development opportunities, and developmentally appropriate classroom and learning resources.

Reduce the Total Number of Curriculum Outcomes
The department will work with teachers and other partners to review curriculum outcomes in selected subject areas, to reduce the total number of outcomes that teachers are required to address and students are expected to achieve within instructional time allotments. Further to the changes made in Atlantic Canada Science Curriculum, the department will continue this work in other curricular areas over the next few years, starting with Atlantic Canada Mathematics Curriculum in 2008–09.

Implement New Curriculum and Resources
New curricula in English programs to be implemented within a three-year period commencing September 2008 are Science 6, Textile Arts and Design 7, Foods and Nutrition 8, and the geometry unit of Mathematics 8, and Exploring Technology 10. Resources to support implementation will be provided in 2008–09.

In the French immersion program, learning resources for students and professional resources for teachers will be provided in key curriculum areas, including mathematics, science and French language arts.

English 12: African Heritage will be implemented, and supports will be provided including learning resources to 25 schools and two provincial workshops.

Implement the Action Plan to Increase Enrolment in French Second Language
The department will increase the number of schools piloting Intensive French (Français intensif). Activities which will be undertaken in 2008-09 to implement the French second language action plan include: developing a research project targeting the oral language skills of grade 6 Core French students; field testing assessment questions for language skills of grade 12 French immersion students; developing a promotional campaign to highlight the advantages of French second language learning; and, beginning a review and revision of existing French second language curriculum guides and supplements.

Increase the Number of French Second Language Teachers
To help meet the demand for qualified French second language educators the department will continue to subsidize an on-line French language course for teachers, increase the number of summer immersion opportunities for interested teachers, administrators and guidance counsellors, and offer a French second language bursary for B.Ed students. Targeted funding will be made available for Core French mentors in grades 7–9.

French second language professional development opportunities in literacy strategies will target Core French, Integrated French, and immersion teachers in grades 7–12.

Use Literacy Assessment Results to Support Students
In 2008–09, the Language Literacy Assessment Program will be administered in grades 3, 6, and 9. Each assessment will yield individual student results for parents/guardians, and the results will be used by schools to inform instruction and provide support/interventions for those students whom the assessments identified as requiring assistance with their ongoing development as readers and/or writers. The department will continue to monitor progress of students in reading and writing through key stages.

Literacy
The department will increase targeted funding for full-time literacy mentors for grades primary-9 in the English school boards. The Learning for Life II goal is to provide the services of 50 literacy mentors.

The department will support the implementation of Teaching in Action: Grades 4–6, Teaching in Action: Grades 7–9, and Writers in Action 7–9. The department will work with boards to monitor the effectiveness of implementation of Active Young Readers Primary–6 and Active Readers 7–9.

The department will work with boards to begin the implementation of strategies described in three new resources: *Learning through Literacy Grades 3–6*, *Learning through Literacy Grades 7–9*, and *Learning through Literacy Grades 10–12*.

The department will support implementation of the Literacy Success Strategy in grades 10 and 11 and will introduce Literacy Success in grade 12 in 2008–09.

Mathematics
The major focus in mathematics education for 2008–09 will be starting the curriculum revision process in grades primary–12. Most of the year will be dedicated to developing a *Mathematics Primary–12 Framework* and updating the *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Mathematics Curriculum*. The department will also begin the revision of specific curriculum for grades primary–3.

Atlantic Canada Mathematics Assessment Resource, Entry–3, collaboratively developed with the Atlantic Provinces, will be distributed for grades primary–3.

The department will support the movement towards more site-based professional learning by continuing to expand the mathematics mentoring program, revising the mental math booklets, and starting the development of a professional learning web-site. The department will also expand our support of professional learning programs; train more facilitators and make resources available to additional sites to support the improvement goals at the school level.

The department will continue support for elementary teachers through the Mathematics 4: Support project and expand this to teachers of grade 5. In 2008–09, new geometry outcomes will be implemented in grade 8 and will be piloted in grade 9.

The department will upgrade the Mathematics: Itembank and deliver a Mathematics: Home-School Communication Grades 7–9 resource. Additional supplementary resources will continue to be a priority.

Introduce New Public School Advanced Programming
The department will begin implementation of Advanced English 12 and Advanced Chemistry 12. The department will support implementation of advanced arts education and global studies courses and begin the development of new advanced public school program online courses.

The International Baccalaureate diploma program is a two-year curriculum offered as a program option to Nova Scotia senior high students in selected schools. It leads to a qualification that is widely recognized by the world's leading universities. It will be offered in thirteen Nova Scotia public schools in 2008–09. More than 300 students will be eligible to earn the International Baccalaureate Diploma in 2009.

Goal 2 Performance Measures

Outcome: Nova Scotia students have improved reading and writing skills

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target	Strategies
Early Elementary Literacy Assessment (grade 3), percent meeting provincial expectations in Language Arts	To be developed	Not yet available	Increase over baseline (2011-12)	Increase support for and access to Reading Recovery™ Implement T*eaching in Action P-3, 4-6, and 7-9* resources Writers in Action grades 4-9 Increase the number of literacy mentors Active Young Readers/Jeunes Lecteurs actifs in grades P-6 and Active Readers/Lecteurs actifs 7-9 Mandate instructional time allotment for language arts for grades P-8 Implement *Spelling Grades Primary-9: A Teaching Resource* Professional learning print and media resources, workshops, institutes
Elementary Literacy Assessment (grade 6), percent meeting provincial expectations in reading and writing	81% (2004-05)	74% (2005-06) 78% (2006-07) 82% (2007-08)	Increase over baseline (2009-10)	
Junior High Literacy Assessment, percent meeting provincial expectations	82% (2007-08)	Not yet available	Increase over baseline (2011-12)	

Outcome: Nova Scotia students have improved math skills

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2011-12)	Strategies
Early Elementary Mathematics Assessment, (grade 3) percent meeting provincial expectations	67% (2007-08)	Not yet available	Increase over baseline	Teaching resources for mathematics grades P-9 Mandate instructional time allotment for mathematics for grades P-8 Increase the number of math mentors Expand the implementation of the *PRIME* professional learning program Review specific curriculum, P-3 Implement *Atlantic Canada Mathematics Assessment Resource, Entry-3*

Goal 3: ***Enable the provision of relevant and high quality post-secondary education and training***

Post Secondary Infrastructure

The Nova Scotia Crown Share University Infrastructure Trust Fund has been established to ease fiscal pressures on universities. The trust will receive 10% of the Crown Share payment to Nova Scotia for 2007–08, up to a maximum of $25 million. Should the Trust receive less than $25 million, the Province has committed, through a Memorandum of Understanding, to work with the universities to identify a combination of funding mechanisms that will provide $25 million in infrastructure funds over the three year period of 2008–09 to 2010–11.

The Trust will provide capital project funding to Nova Scotia universities for the academic years 2008–09, 2009–10, and 2010–11. Funding from the Trust will support renovations, refit or new construction that would reduce the $422 million deferred maintenance requirement at Nova Scotia universities.

Memorandum of Understanding on University Funding and Tuition Fees
The department has established a three-year funding commitment starting in 2008–09. Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) universities will freeze tuition for all students studying at Nova Scotia universities at current levels for the next three years.

Nova Scotia University Student Bursary Trust
A $66 million Nova Scotia University Student Bursary Trust is being established to make the cost of education more affordable for Nova Scotia and out-of-province Canadian university students. The bursary will provide a benefit to Nova Scotia students studying at Nova Scotia universities of $761 in 2008-09; $1,022 in 2009-10; and $1,283 in 2010–11. Canadian students from outside Nova Scotia will benefit from a bursary of $261 in 2010–11.

The bursary and Memorandum of Understanding will bring the cost of education borne by Nova Scotia students attending a Nova Scotia university to the national average by 2010-11.

Set a Research Agenda for the Post Secondary Education Research Advisory Panel
The Minister's Post Secondary Education Research Advisory Panel, comprising academics, students, government officials and members of the public, is a newly formed body with a mandate to undertake research projects of relevance to post secondary education policy in Nova Scotia. The Panel will develop and advise the Minister of Education on a strategic policy research agenda on issues that have an effect on the public post-secondary education system in Nova Scotia, including, but not limited to: access to and quality of post-secondary education, student debt and enrolment.

In 2008–09, the Panel will set a multi-year research agenda.

Implement Minister's Response to the Review of Teacher Education
The Review Panel on teacher education submitted its report in January 2008 with 19 recommendations focusing on six areas of concern. These include the quality of teacher preparation, responsiveness to teacher supply and demand, rigorous selection of candidates, quality of the student practicum, program length and delivery models, and the need for better communications and responsiveness to the needs of today's classroom. The department will work with partners to implement the Minister's response to the report of the Review Panel on teacher education.

Implement the NSCC Growth Plan
The department will continue to work with the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) to address the increasing demand for college level graduates to meet the labour market needs of the province. In 2008-09, the College's operating grant will increase by $4 million to support the addition of 470 new seats made available through the growth plan.

Goal 3 Performance Measures

Outcome: Better Educated Nova Scotians

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2010-11)	Strategies (2008-11)
Average Nova Scotia tuition fee	$6,422 (2006-07)	$5,878 (2007-08)	2010-11 national average tuition[2]	Premier's commitment to reduce tuition to national average by 2010-11
Nova Scotians enrolled in Canadian universities *Source: Statistics Canada, Post Secondary Information System*	32,230 (2002-03)	33,175 (2003-04) 32,682 (2004-05)	Increase over baseline	
Percent of Nova Scotians aged 25-54 with post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree *Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey*	61.8% (2004-05)	60.5% (2005-06) 61.2% (2006-07)	Increase over baseline	MOU with Universities on Funding and Fees Nova Scotia Community College development and growth strategy Improvements to the Student Assistance Program Improve access to grants targeted at students with disabilities. Establish post-secondary disability service standards.
Number of diplomas, certificates and degrees issued by Nova Scotia Institutions *Source: Statistics Canada, Post Secondary Information System, and the Nova Scotia Community College*	12,398 (2003-04)	13,258 (2004-05) 13,187 (2005-06) 13,966 (2006-07)	Increase over baseline	
Enrolment at the Nova Scotia Community College	8,495 (2004-05)	8,978 (2005-06) 9,347 (2006-07) 9,922 (2007-08)	10,400 (2008-09)	

[2]The target for this measure is dependent upon Federal Government annual calculations of the national average tuition fees. The target is for Nova Scotia tuition to be at the national average by 2010 as calculated by the Federal Government that year.

Goal 4: Promote healthy, active learning communities and families

Implement the Health Promoting Schools Strategy
The department, in partnership with the Department of Health Promotion and Protection, school boards, and district health authorities, will host a provincial Health Promoting Schools Showcase in May 2008. This event will highlight the success and achievements of regional health promoting school teams and the school communities in their regions. The department will launch a Health Promoting Schools website and publish informational materials to promote school health.

Support Health Education
With partners, the department will review and revise curriculum for Health Education primary–6 to reduce the total number of outcomes. The department will support implementation of Healthy Living 8 and provide textbooks for a new Healthy Living 9 course. The department will support boards and schools in strengthening delivery of mental and emotional health education components of the curriculum, grades 4–9.

To contribute to the Alcohol Strategy, the department will collaborate with the Department of Health Promotion and Protection to support delivery of addiction prevention curriculum. To contribute to the Problem Gambling Strategy the department will collaborate with the Department of Health Promotion and Protection to develop problem gambling prevention resources for youth, teachers, and school administrators.

To support implementation of the sexual health education component of *Framework for Action: Youth Sexual Health in Nova Scotia* (2006), the department will provide resources and support boards in offering professional development opportunities for teachers of grades 5–9.

Food and Nutrition
The department will support implementation of standards for the provincial breakfast program, and develop a monitoring tool to assist boards and their schools in monitoring and evaluating implementation of the Food and Nutrition Policy for Nova Scotia Public Schools.

Promote Youth Leadership
The department, in partnership with the Department of Health Promotion and Protection and school boards, will provide opportunities for high school youth to demonstrate leadership in injury prevention, through involvement in the *SMARTRISK No Regrets* program. The department will fund the expansion of the Youth Fitness Leader Certification Program within the public school program.

Advance the Active Kids, Healthy Kids Strategy
In collaboration with the Department of Health Promotion and Protection and other partners, the department will support school boards in advancing the *Active Kids, Healthy Kids* strategy. A particular focus in 2008–09 will be implementing projects designed to increase the participation of females ages 10–18 in regular physical activity, including leadership support to boards to introduce and carry out physical education initiatives for girls.

In collaboration with the Department of Health Promotion and Protection and school boards, the department will sustain the sport animator initiative to continue bridging school and community resources for improving opportunities for play, recreation, and sport.

Increase Support for Physical Education
Government has committed to making physical education a mandatory high school credit, and students graduating in 2011 will be required to have a physical education credit. The department will provide grants to boards to address the various needs they have identified to implement the new requirement. The department will support boards and their schools in implementation of the new Physical Education 10, Physically Active Living 11, and Fitness Leadership 11 courses. This support will include a provincial workshop, certification opportunities related to outdoor education, and learning resources.

Goal 5: Foster access, equity and diversity through and within education and training

Increase Correspondence and Online Courses
The department will increase its French second language correspondence study and online course offerings. Provincially-funded student seats in online learning courses will be increased from the current 110 seats to 200.

The department will also expand opportunities for professional development for teachers using the common online learning platform.

Provide More Supports for African Nova Scotian Learners
The department will establish a framework with the Nova Scotia Community College to promote diversity and equity policy development and projects, and work with schools of education at Nova Scotia Universities which offer Bachelor of Education programs to improve recruitment of African Nova Scotian students and to enhance pre-service training in cultural diversity and social justice issues in the classroom.

Develop Gaelic Programming
To implement Government's commitment to support Gaelic language and culture initiatives, the department will continue to support Gaelic language at the elementary and high school levels by developing curriculum in grades 3-9,securing resources in grades 3-12; providing professional development opportunities for teachers, and offering program grants to school boards to fund Gaelic language teachers.

Assess Progress of Racial Equity Policy Implementation
An Innovation Configuration Map has been developed to guide the Department of Education's implementation of the Racial Equity Policy. The map creates a vision of what each policy looks like in practice and provides a template to assess the progress of the implementation of the Policy. School boards and the department are developing an Innovation Configuration Map for school boards' use over this year. The Department will continue implementation of the Racial Equity action plan regarding policies affecting its programs and services.

Enhance the Nova Scotia Student Assistance Program
The department will improve assistance to students through a suite of initiatives, including directly lending Nova Scotia provincial loans to students and reinvesting all efficiencies gained through direct lend into the Student Assistance Program. Reinvestments will be made through a reduction in the interest rate charged to students, the introduction of supplemental loans and the implementation of needs based grants.

The department will also integrate Post-Secondary Disability Services data management with that of the new Student Assistance data management system.

In addition, the department will implement an outreach strategy focused on increasing awareness and understanding of the benefits and costs of post-secondary education, and of the role of student assistance in seeking to ensure that no Nova Scotia resident is denied access to post-secondary education as a result of financial constraints.

Improve Access to Library Resources
The Nova Scotia Library project, a newly established collaboration of all university and public libraries in Nova Scotia, will improve access to library resources for all Nova Scotians. Projects to be undertaken include the licensing of electronic databases and determining the feasibility of a one-card system by the end of 2008–09.

Increase the Number of Students with Disabilities Transitioning to Post-Secondary
The department will research and develop strategies to increase the number of students with disabilities directly transitioning from grade 12 to post-secondary studies in the Province.

Goal 5 Performance Measures

Outcome: Nova Scotians, rural and urban, have improved access to a full range of library services via the internet

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target	Strategies
Use of web-based library - number of visits to public library services through web sites	1,810,967 (2005-06)	2,359,485 (2006-07) 2,711,767 (2007-08)	Increase over baseline (2009-10)	This measure has been discontinued as Nova Scotia public libraries are no longer able to collect this data.

Outcome: Responsive and Flexible Learning Environment

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target	Strategies
Number of BLAC Report recommendations implemented	13 of 30 (2001-02)	22 0f 30 (2004-05) 25 of 30 (2005-06) 28 of 30 (2006-07)	All implemented or initiated by 2008-09[3]	Continue implementation of BLAC Report recommendations
Student enrolment in online public school courses	77 provincially funded students (2005-06)	94 provincially funded students (2006-07) 94 provincially funded students (2007-08)	Increase over baseline (2010-11)	Coordinate online pilot courses with school boards and increase provincially funded seats for small schools.

[3]The target year for this measure extended to 2008-09.

Outcome: Students with Disabilities have Increased Access to Post-Secondary Education

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target	Strategies
Number of students with disabilities graduating with post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree who receive assistance from the Province of Nova Scotia.	478 (2005-06)	537 (2006-07)	740 (2010-11)	Improved marketing materials: web site, handbooks, brochures. Special project funding to institutions. Establish goods and services standards. Building connections with P-12 system. Survey students with disabilities to determine success strategies and gaps.
Percent of total student enrollment at colleges and universities in Nova Scotia receiving assistance from one or more of the provincial programs for students with disabilities.	4.1% (2005-06)	4.2% (2006-07)	6%	

Outcome: Improved Funding and Program Delivery of Nova Scotia Student Assistance

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target	Strategies
Number of grants issued for under represented groups.	1,548 (2004-05)	5,102 (2005-06) 4,609 (2006-07)[4]	Increase number of grants issued by 10% over the previous year (2009-10)	Improvements to the Student Assistance Program. Introduction of needs based grants for under represented groups, including students from low-income families and students with disabilities. FPT discussions on improving student loan access.
Value of grants issued for under represented groups.	$3,036,462 (2004-05)	$8,866,815 (2005-06) $8,725,907 (2006-07)[5]	Increase value of grants issued by 10% over baseline (2009-10)	

[4]2006-07 is the most recent school year for which data is available

[5]2006-07 is the most recent school year for which data is available

Goal 6: Develop a skilled and adaptable workforce

Expand the Options and Opportunities Program
The department will invest in an expansion of the highly successful Options and Opportunities (O_2) program. This innovative program connects high school students with employers, secures admission to the Nova Scotia Community College upon graduation, and helps prepare them for success in the labour market. In 2008–09, O_2 will be expanded from grade 10 to grade 11 in eight schools and from grade 11 to grade 12 in 26 schools. Thirty-four schools are currently offering the program. Funding will be provided for additional schools to offer this innovative program.

Support Community-Based Learning
The department will support boards and their schools in the growth of community-based learning. To support the expansion of co-operative education, the department will provide mentor services for co-op teachers. The department will work with boards and other partners to provide professional learning opportunities for co-op teachers, guidance counsellors, and school administrators.

Expand Skilled Trades Education
The department will further expand choices for hands-on learning at the high school level by working with school boards to introduce Skilled Trades Education 10. Further development will include Construction Trades 11. The department will partner with school boards, the NSCC, and the Construction Association of Nova Scotia to provide co-operative education and youth apprenticeship opportunities for high school students interested in exploring construction trades.

Provide More Resources for the Youth Pathways and Transitions Initiative
The Nova Scotia LifeWork Portfolio will be implemented in grade 9. The department will pilot *Perspectives*, a career development resource for secondary students.

The department will introduce Introduction to Business Technology 11. The department will implement Exploring Technology 10, and develop other technology education courses. The department will implement Family Studies 10 and develop Sound Recording Technology 12.

Support Transition of Young Adults with Special Needs
In partnership with the Department of Community Services, the Department of Education will support young adults with special needs who are transitioning from secondary school to community living and work. A transition year program will be jointly funded by the two departments. The Post Secondary Transition Support Program will be offered over a maximum period of 12 months and will provide employability preparation and/or post secondary education preparation. In 2008-09, the support will be provided in the Halifax Regional School Board through the Access to Community Education and Employment (ACEE) initiative and in the Strait Regional School Board through the Strait-to-Work initiative.

Undertake a Follow-Up Survey of Private Career College Students
An annual student follow-up survey will be conducted with results widely disseminated to stakeholders to positively influence the training decisions of clients, employers, and career colleges.

Goal 7: Strengthen accountability in the areas of governance, resource investment and utilization, and reporting of results

Measure and Report on Student Achievement

National and International Assessments
The results of a new national assessment, the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP) will be released in the spring of 2008.This new assessment provides results for the performance of our 13-year-old students in mathematics, reading, and science. The department will continue its commitment to international assessments following the release of results from the Progress in Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and the Program of International Student Assessment (PISA) PIRLS is administered to our grade 4 students and PISA is administered to our 15-year-old students.

Provincial Assessments
Nova Scotia Examinations (NSE) will be administered in English 12, English/Communications 12, Mathematics 12/Mathématiques 12, Advanced Mathematics 12/Mathématiques avancées 12, and in science. All NSE mathematics will be marked by the department of education and marks will be provided to schools at the end of the first and second semesters.

Introduce a New Reporting System for Assessment Results
The department will implement a more accurate reporting system for assessment results. Assessment results received by schools will be formatted so that they are consistent with the reporting of results from national and international assessments. The new format will allow the department to gauge progress in student performance from year to year and grade level to grade level.

Develop a Multi-Year Model for Library Boards
The department will develop a memorandum of understanding amongst library boards, municipalities and government by June 2008, which will provide for multi-year operating funding for public libraries and other mutually agreed upon goals for the public library system. The MOU will also establish a new funding disbursement model which addresses population shift.

Implement the Departmental French Language Services Plan
The priorities outlined in the Department of Education's 2008–09 French Language Services Plan will be implemented with a focus on assessment of existing French language services and identification of key areas where these services are required; provision of French language training opportunities for employees; and, participation on the Government's French Language Coordinators' Committee.

Undertake Review of Publishing Needs and Practices

The department will undertake a review of its publishing needs and practices, and develop recommendations on future publishing directions. The review will include identification of any inefficiencies with current practice, analysis of the value of published products on an annual basis, and an evaluation of whether current publishing is in compliance with policies of the department and Communications Nova Scotia. The review will include recommendations for restructuring publishing and communications design services for the department, as necessary.

Goal 7 Performance Measures

Outcome: Nova Scotia is accountable for education based on international comparison of assessment results

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2010-11)	Strategies
Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results for 15-year-olds, scale score	Reading 513 (NS 2003) Math 515 (NS 2003) Science 505 (NS 2003)	Reading 505 (NS 2006) Math 506 (NS 2006) Science 520 (NS 2006)	Nova Scotia's best results since participating in PISA.[6] Reading 521 (NS 2000) Math 515 (NS 2003) Science 520 (NS 2006)	Support for school-based professional learning communities focussed on instructional improvement. Reduce total number of curriculum outcomes. Writers in Action/Écrivains à l'oeuvre 4-9 Teaching resources for mathematics grades p-9 Mandate instructional time allotment for language arts and mathematics for grades p-8 Implement *Dynamic Classroom Assessment Mathematics* professional learning program for junior high Implement new science program for grades p-6 Increase access to Reading Recovery™ Increase funding for literacy and math mentors Literacy Success 10, 11 and 12

[6]The target for this measure was adjusted to enable reporting on achievement in each subject area included in the assessment. The next administration of PISA will take place in 2009; the target year was extended to 2010-11, to allow reporting subsequent to release of the results.

Outcome: Better Educated Nova Scotians

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2009-10)	Strategies
Nova Scotia Examinations (NSE), percent passing	English: 76% (2003-04) Chemistry: 66% (2003-04) Physics: 59% (2003-04) Math[7] 31% (2004-05)	English: 89% (2004-05) 87% (2005-06) Chemistry: 59% (2004-05) Physics: 59% (2004-05) 61% (2005-06) Math 28% (2005-06)	Increase over baseline	Writers in Action/Écrivains à l'oeuvre 4-9. Develop resources that can be used by Mathematics 10 teachers to increase the algebra skills of students Online Mathematics Itembank Create a Mathematics Professional Learning website Increase funding for literacy and math mentors Literacy Success 10, 11 and 12 Implement BreakThrough Mathematics professional learning program for senior high

[7] 2004-05 was the first year the Math NSE was administered.

8. Human Resources Strategy

The Department of Education will focus on providing human resources development activity which is aligned to the Corporate Employee Survey Results as well as the Corporate Human Resources Plan. Activities for 2008–09 will be aligned to the Corporate HR Plan with continued emphasis as follows:

To make a difference through a skilled, committed, and accountable public service
HR group will continue to offer courses to employees of the Department of Education. Courses will be offered based on needs identified through the performance management process to support employees to build their skills and abilities to carry out the work they do on a day to day basis, as well as develop for future positions of interest.

To be a preferred employer
All employees are required to have a performance plan. To that end, the department has placed an emphasis on providing the training and coaching necessary for all employees and work units to participate in the development of performance plans which link individual work targets to department and Government priorities. Performance plans and their corresponding development plans will form the basis for succession and talent management.

To be a safe and supportive environment
During 2008–09, the department will co-operate with the Public Service Commission on an occupational health and safety audit, and a key focus of the year will be addressing its outcomes.

Managers and employees of the department will be expected to participate in the roll-out and implementation of the new 'Respectful Workplace' policy when it is introduced. As well, training sessions in support of this policy will be promoted and offered to all managers and employees.

To be a diverse workforce
The department will work within the Diversity and Affirmative Action Plan with a view to promoting the plan itself and key activities within the plan. This will include:
reinforcing the availability of the mandatory course, 'Diversity and Employment Equity';
promoting 'Aboriginal Perceptions' course and ' Diversity for Leaders'; and, striving to utilize the resources available to build a diverse workforce.

To be a learning organization
Department employees will continue to participate in Leadership Development programs and course calendar programs offered through the Public Service Commission.

All employees will have access to training and development opportunities available through the Learnnet calendar and offered by both the PSC and the internal HR unit.

9. Budget Context

Education and Assistance to Universities			
	2007-2008	2007-2008	2008-2009
Program & Service Area	($thousands)	($thousands)	($thousands)
Total Education Program Expenses:			
Senior Management	750	747	733
Human Resources & Legal Services	1,511	1556	0
Corporate Policy	1,681	1,561	1,767
Corporate Services	14,922	14,554	14,184
Public Schools	33,651	32,580	33,986
Higher Education	50,805	50,300	48,400
Skills & Learning	40,067	39,395	0
Acadian & French Language Services	1,047	1,102	1,130
Public Education Funding	854,444	853,879	905,425
Other Grants	16,663	16,663	17,163
Learning Resources Credit Allocation	8,813	8,675	8,813
Teachers' Pension	55,590	55,590	56,329
School Capital Amortization	56,370	57,491	59,393
Community College Grants	101,310	104,610	114,421
Total Education Program Expenses	**1,237,624**	**1,238,703**	**1,261,744**
Total Assistance to Universities	**258,920**	**400,312**	**230,511**
Total DOE & Assistance to Universities	**1,496,544**	**1,639,015**	**1,492,255**
TCA Purchase Requirements	**58,787**	**66,969**	**102,158**
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	**404.0**	**361.1**	**305.2**